

A NEW SPECIES OF *HELICHRYSUM* (COMPOSITAE) FROM MALAWI

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ABSTRACT. *Helichrysum poliioides* is described from montane grassland on Mt Mulanje, Malawi. It is a dwarf shrub with spatulate leaves and tight woolly inflorescences of small homogamous capitula.

***Helichrysum poliioides* B. L. Burtt, species nova**, nulli arcte affinis, habitu suffruticoso, foliis numerosis spatulatis, capitulis congestis 12–14-floris homogamis, receptaculo nudo distincta.

Suffrutex ad 60cm alta; rami inferne cortice pallide fusco praediti (fide Newman & Whitmore), superne foliis densis obtekti, tomentosi. *Folia* numerosa, ascendencia, imbricata, spatulata, c.13mm longa, 3mm lata, utrinque sericeo-tomentosa, uninervia. *Inflorescentia* densissima apice ramorum, c.5cm diam., e ramulis floriferis c.6 iterum ramosis constructa, glomerulis ultimis capitula c.4–6 coacervata foliis redactis et lana contextis circumcincta gerentibus. *Capitula* homogama, 12–14-flora, 4–5mm longa. *Involucra* bracteae 2–3 exteriores capitulum dimidio breviores, interiores flores aequantes vel intimae eos paulo superantes, parte basali membranacea et plus minusve lineari apice membranaceo expanso emarginato pallide brunneo. *Receptaculum* nudum. *Corolla* 3mm longa, basi tubulosa superne anguste campanulata: lobi marginibus crassis, intus papillati, extra pilis glandulosis apice dense praediti. *Pappi* setae numerosae, tenues, barbellatae praecipue ad apices, corollae aequilongae, basi liberae, caducae. *Achenia* (matura?) 0.75mm longa, pilis duplicibus obtusis haud myxogenis induta.

Type: Malawi, Mt Mulanje, Likhavula valley, 2050m, 17 viii 1983, Johnston-Stewart 77 (E holo.; K, NU iso.).

MALAWI. Mt Mulanje, Little Ruo plateau, rocky bank of Little Ruo River, 6 viii 1956, Newman & Whitmore 382 (BM); ibidem, near Little Ruo hut, Brummitt 12337 (K).

Prior to Mr Johnston-Stewart's collection this species was known only from material in young bud. It has not been possible to find a close affinity for it. Any resemblance to the group of *Helichrysum forskahlii* (J. F. Gmelin) Hilliard & Burtt (the old *H. fruticosum* Vathek) is contradicted by the spatulate leaves of *H. poliioides* and by its lack of fimbriae on the receptacle. In the absence of any one memorable and distinctive feature, the new species is named from its superficial resemblance in habit and inflorescence to *Teucrium polium* L.